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KBOCC Mission Statement: *As a tribal land grant institution, Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College supports and uplifts all learners to achieve their goals through holistic education, while promoting Anishinaabe culture, language, and lifeways.*

MARKETING STRATEGY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

1. Overview

Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College (KBOCC) is one of 36 accredited tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) located in Baraga County, Michigan, dedicated to serving the higher education needs of the L'Anse Indian Reservation and surrounding communities. KBOCC is a rural, open admission tribal land-grant institution, serving about 250 students each year in over 20 academic programs offering associate degrees and certificates in areas such as Anishinaabe cultural studies, business administration, early childhood education, environmental science, human studies, nursing, general studies, and vocational and workforce development programs. KBOCC provides multiple and growing opportunities for high school students through its dual enrollment career and technical and early middle college programs. KBOCC graduates can transfer easily to universities and colleges in Michigan or start a career in an in-demand field. KBOCC offers an affordable, local start to higher education for rural and underserved students. The College also focuses a great deal on current student success and retention.

As part of our strategic initiative to expand our reach, enhance our brand, and grow and sustain our student enrollment, we are seeking proposals from qualified marketing professionals or agencies to develop a comprehensive marketing and brand strategy. KBOCC has many value propositions to offer prospective students including cultural preservation, quality of programs, individualized attention, affordability, location, flexibility, value, workforce and professional development opportunities, community involvement, and transfer and/or entry to careers upon graduation to name a few. Some of the biggest challenges to KBOCC's name recognition includes working with limited marketing budget and capacity, as well as misperceptions of student eligibility and educational value. Activities centered around student success and retention are essential to consider in prospective student marketing planning.

2. Purpose and Project Description

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to identify qualified and experienced marketing firms or consultants to create and execute a comprehensive marketing plan and campaign to further KBOCC's recruitment and enrollment goals. The goals of this project are to enhance our institutional visibility and community perception, engage with key audiences and stakeholders, and support strategic enrollment growth and profile. The selected firm will assist in developing effective tools, materials, and campaigns that highlight KBOCC's unique offerings and reinforce our cultural identity. KBOCC desires to create a multi-year, rather than year-by-year, marketing plan with targeted audiences, clear goals, and trackable results. Aims of our marketing strategy include:

- Increasing awareness of KBOCC as a high-quality, affordable, accessible, and supportive institution of higher education, which supports & uplifts all learners and prepares students for lifelong success;
- Increasing enrollment by communicating our value and motivating students to consider and enroll at KBOCC;
- Increasing community and stakeholder engagement and alignment with local needs;
- In addition to general awareness efforts, KBOCC is seeking to promote its Anishinaabe identity and cultural values.

KBOCC's current strategic plan is expiring and has initiated the process for a new strategic plan in 2025. KBOCC will also be celebrating the 50th anniversary of its founding in 2025. Both milestones will coincide with the anticipated implementation of KBOCC's marketing strategy.

3. Anticipated Scope of Work

The selected firm will be responsible for developing a cohesive marketing strategy and implementing a campaign that leverages digital, print, and community-based platforms, all at a competitive cost to KBOCC. The firm should demonstrate a clear understanding of the education sector and the unique characteristics of our institution.

a. Market Analysis and Plan Development

- **Market Analysis:** Conduct a thorough analysis to identify key audiences and target demographics to understand trends relevant to student recruitment and enrollment.
- **Brand Positioning:** Evaluate KBOCC's brand perception and provide recommendations for a refreshed visual identity, including logo and brand colors, how current messaging might be expanded upon, and value proposition that differentiates our institution and resonates with diverse target audiences.
- **Plan Development:** Propose strategies for a multi-year campaign to increase awareness, engagement, and recruitment, across various channels and platforms (digital, print, social media, etc.) including information about what target audiences the marketing activities would reach. This strategy should include outreach strategies specific to Native American students and community stakeholders, drive prospective students to the website, and include program-specific campaigns to promote high value, high-demand programs leading to in-demand careers and family-sustaining wages to prospective students. The plan should include a timeline for marketing activities aligned with our academic calendar, the launch of our new strategic plan and 50th year anniversary, and upcoming events. The plan should also define clear objectives and measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with our strategic goals and provide a detailed budget plan for the campaign.

b. Marketing Campaign Execution

Work with team members on executing the strategy and how to implement the marketing plan:

- **Creative Content Development:** Design engaging marketing content and collateral, including visuals, copywriting, and videos, that align with our brand and resonate with target audiences.
- **Digital Marketing:** Implement or suggest digital marketing efforts, including social media advertising, website marketing, email marketing, search engine marketing (SEM), and search engine optimization (SEO).
- **Media Planning and Management:** Develop and manage a media plan that includes digital, print, and local outreach and community engagement efforts.

- Performance Tracking: Establish metrics to monitor and evaluate campaign performance and provide regular reports on outcomes and KPIs.

4. Proposed/Anticipated Project Schedule

- Year 1:
 - RFP Released: November 11, 2024
 - Proposals due to KBOCC: December 2, 2024
 - Selection of winning bidder: January 13, 2025
 - Contract execution and start of project: January 27, 2025
 - Development of marketing plan with a target implementation date of Fall 2025
- Year 2:
 - Execution and management of marketing plan/campaign
- Year 3:
 - Execution, management, monitoring, and evaluation of marketing plan/campaign

5. Proposal Requirements

Bidders shall ensure that all information requested below is submitted as part of the proposal and are encouraged to submit additional information that would further describe their capabilities. Responses should be presented in this order and clearly marked with the section number they respond to. Bidders should describe and provide strategies and proposed pricing for each service requested.

1. Name, address, title, and phone number of the primary person responsible for the proposal.
2. A statement of qualifications including number of years' experience with development marketing plans, company's structure and size, statement of company business, purpose and core strengths or unique characteristics.
3. A list of similar projects and work samples conducted in the last five (5) years for educational institutions and other companies of similar size and resources as KBOCC. Provide years of experience working with clients, email and phone contact for clients. Please identify any projects worked on that involved Native American Tribes, Tribal Colleges, or community colleges.
4. A profile of key personnel to be involved in the project.
5. Specifications for integration with any third-party partners to meet the requirements of this RFP, if applicable.
6. An indication of the types of information and data you would require from KBOCC to execute the campaign.
7. Please explain the process to be employed to execute all aspects of the work. Provide any initial thoughts on the campaign, what unique qualifications your agency brings, how your agency might proceed if awarded the opportunity including engaging various team members, their level of participation, and their frequency at the client site.
8. Please define the deliverables you anticipate providing to KBOCC with an anticipated schedule and budget.
9. Provide a fee proposal that includes a lump sum/fixed fee for the professional services requested and offered. Identify all items in an estimate of reimbursable expenses anticipated for the work. List any

and all fees outside of direct media buys for all services listed in the proposal. Bid prices shall be inclusive of all costs related to the analysis, planning and development of the necessary materials. KBOCC will retain all rights to materials developed.

8. Evaluation Criteria

Responses for each section will be evaluated as follows:

- Understanding of KBOCC and the prospective student market, description of due diligence activities (20%)
- Creative and innovative marketing strategy and comprehensive plan (40%)
- Emphasis on results tracking (15%)
- Service costs, experience, and reputation (25%)

Preference will be given to firms who:

- Are familiar with KBOCC's service region and target audiences;
- Have experience with higher education marketing, and more specifically tribal community college marketing;
- Are committed to innovative and cost-effective strategies;
- Have experience managing complex digital marketing campaigns across multiple channels with multiple messages;
- Have demonstrated understanding of ADA compliance in digital and print ad marketing.

KBOCC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any formality in any proposal, and generally take such actions as shall be in their best interest.

9. Due Date and Submission

Due Date: All responses must be received on or before 2 p.m. (Eastern time) on December 2, 2024.

Email to marketing@kbocc.edu with the subject line "Marketing Strategy RFP"

The College will not consider or examine late responses. Amended responses will not be considered unless they are received on or before the due date and time. A duly constituted corporate official legally capable of binding the contractor must sign responses.

Questions and Clarifications

Questions should be directed to marketing@kbocc.edu with the subject line of "Marketing Strategy RFP Questions".